

CITY OF SCOTTSDALE – FAA NORTHWEST 2000 PLAN UPDATE

May 20, 2002

The FAA implemented the Northwest 2000 (NW2000) Plan routing and airspace revisions on February 21, 2002.

As part of the City's aggressive ongoing efforts to obtain balanced regional air traffic, Scottsdale has been monitoring the NW2000 Plan implementation and evaluating results in a cooperative effort with the citizen groups, pilot organizations, the City of Phoenix and the FAA.

The City of Scottsdale is continuing a technical dialog with local and regional FAA personnel and pilot groups to evaluate potential changes.

While constrained by litigation, the FAA has been receptive and has committed to reviewing suggested changes from the City and pilot groups.

The FAA has indicated that with the current airspace assignments, options for significant changes to current conditions are limited without creating an undue burden to one community, or creating unacceptable impacts to safety or airspace capacity.

As a result, the City anticipates that changes may be developed over time, however, significant revisions to the new NW2000 routes are not expected without a regional "clean sheet" airspace re-design.

The City has learned the following information by consultation with the City of Phoenix and FAA, reviewing radar flight track data and receiving significant input from citizens and pilots.

1. The pre-NW2000 Plan condition generated significant complaints regarding Sky Harbor traffic over central and east Scottsdale. Complaints of this type were significantly reduced after the NW2000 Plan implementation.
2. The commercial airliner arrival route over east Scottsdale was shifted east of Fountain Hills.
3. The new northbound Silow route has reduced the amount of airliner departures heading northwest over Scottsdale, and those remaining northwesterly flights have been at higher average altitudes, although the higher summer temperatures will decrease aircraft climb performance somewhat.
4. The FAA has not fully implemented the RNAV "automated" flight procedures and are still using "classic" procedures using radar vectoring, however, they expect to slowly implement the RNAV procedures over the next six to nine months.
5. Radar vectoring will continue due to the safety and traffic needs within the busy terminal environment, however, RNAV implementation may converge some of the dispersed flight paths over time.
6. The most significant change from NW2000 has been the implementation of the Silow departure route used by both Sky Harbor and satellite airports. Both commercial and satellite traffic now fly over the north central valley in a northeasterly direction when Sky Harbor is operating on west-flow. Previously this traffic flew in a west-to-east direction over north central Scottsdale on the previous Eagul route. While on east-flow, Sky Harbor traffic on the new Silow route does not fly over the north central valley. Departures from Scottsdale airport on the Silow route are lower than the Sky Harbor traffic on the same route because Sky Harbor traffic has a greater distance in which to reach a higher altitude before flying over the north valley.
7. General Aviation traffic (small aircraft and helicopters operating under Visual Flight Rules [VFR]) has not been significantly impacted by the NW2000 Plan implementation. Radar tracks for pre-NW2000 and post-NW2000 show significant numbers of low-altitude VFR aircraft over all valley communities, with no significant changes in flight corridors or altitudes.
8. Scottsdale Airport traffic routes have changed and have resulted in several negative effects. The details of the Scottsdale Airport traffic changes were not disclosed in the NW2000 Plan Draft EA or Final EA documents (nor were the details required to be disclosed as the EA process only addresses commercial airliner traffic).

9. Generally in the north valley, Scottsdale airport traffic is initially limited to the airspace just north and south of the airport that is located between the busy Sky Harbor arrival and departure tracks that obstruct airspace to the east and west.
10. The amount of jet traffic using the southern arrival route was inadvertently increased by procedural changes by Kansas City and Albuquerque Center, which has increased the amount of jets arriving from the south and flying northward over Sky Harbor to reach Scottsdale Airport. Corrections to FAA Center procedures may reduce the inadvertent shift of traffic using the southern arrival route.
11. The satellite airport arrival route was shifted approximately two miles to the west (from approximately the Pima Road alignment to approximately the Scottsdale Road alignment.)

RECAP OF PREVIOUS SCOTTSDALE EFFORTS:

- 1 - It was Scottsdale that initially stepped up to the plate with resources, technical expertise, and leadership to begin the regional discussions regarding balanced, technically feasible alternatives that would help to mitigate the impacts of NW2000 on all involved communities.
- 2 - Scottsdale was the first community to investigate and extract information about proposed NW2000 Plan, three months prior to the release of the FAA draft Environmental Assessment (EA) document.
- 3 - Scottsdale hired a technical airspace consultant to assist in developing technically feasible alternatives and an aviation legal consultant to assist in developing legal strategies.
- 4 - Scottsdale led the regional discussions regarding balanced technically feasible alternatives that do not overly impact one community to another's benefit.
- 5 - Scottsdale was the only community to propose an alternative route protecting Scottsdale and other east valley communities, prior to the release of the NW2000 draft EA.
- 6 - Scottsdale was a primary source of information to citizens through City Council briefings, community meetings, E-mail alerts and distributing the EA document via a user-friendly website.
- 7 - Scottsdale conducted five public information workshops to inform citizens prior to release of the NW2000 draft EA.
- 8 - Scottsdale provided technical expertise and leadership among the valley communities to develop a regional Community Consensus Alternative.
- 9 - Scottsdale coordinated regional lobbying efforts with Washington legislators, FAA Western Pacific Region and FAA Headquarters in Washington.
- 10 - Scottsdale has been actively monitoring the implementation of the NW2000 routes for compliance with the Final Record of Decision.
- 11 - Scottsdale has been lobbying the FAA to implement the planned RNAV routes as quickly as possible and make refinements, when possible, for noise abatement.
- 12 - Scottsdale has continued a dialog with the FAA and will continue to inform them of citizen concerns regarding noise and perceived safety issues.
- 13 - Scottsdale is committed to working on air traffic issues in the future.